



May 2011

Draft Minutes of March 31, 2011 Board Meeting

Board members present

Charley Bingham
Ethelda Burke, chair
Roberta Greene
Jesus Hernandez
Paul Ishii
Addison Jacobs
Sam Shaddox
Sam Smith

Welcome and introductions

HECB Chair Ethelda Burke opened the meeting at 9:00 a.m. and asked the members of the audience and the Board to introduce themselves.

Consent agenda items approved

Action: Sam Smith moved for approval of the January meeting minutes and two additional items on the consent agenda:

- January meeting minutes.
- A moderate degree change for Central Washington University, Bachelor of Science Aviation Management and Bachelor of Science Professional Pilot, *Resolution 11-04*.
- A new degree program for the University of Washington, Master of Science Sustainable Transportation, *Resolution 11-05*.

Roberta Greene seconded the motion. All consent agenda items were unanimously approved.

Update on Legislative Session

Chris Thompson, director of government, college and university relations provided a status report on higher education legislation and other bills important to the work of the HECB.

- HECB-request legislation is moving through the process (doctoral programs at branch campuses; financial aid administration consistency; health sciences and services authority reporting).
- HECB member confirmations: the appointments of Addison Jacobs and Sam Shaddox, and re-appointment of Charley Bingham are moving through the confirmation process.

Other bills and higher education issues under consideration include:

- Three bills regarding higher education governance: Department of Education; Education Council; Council of Higher Education.
- Financial Aid: Less-than-half-time State Need Grant; Aerospace training loan program; and caseload forecasting.
- Guaranteed Education Tuition program: The GET program would be re-structured under the terms of SSB 5749. The program would be closed in its current form and a new 'GET II' program would be opened.
- University Center of North Puget Sound: The management and leadership of the University Center at Everett Community College would be transferred to Washington State University under SSSB 5636. The entire bill is to take effect only after the HECB conducts a needs assessment and a viability determination (if required) and recommends that the provisions of the bill should occur.
- Western Governors University: Under SHB 1822, the Western Governors University-Washington is authorized to deliver online, competency-based education in the state. The HECB is directed to work with WGU-Washington to create data-sharing processes to assess the institution's performance.

Report of the Executive Director

Don Bennett provided a brief review of the day's agenda and an update on agency programs and activities including:

Proposed changes to degree program review – At its March 8 meeting, the Board's Education Committee discussed the proposed changes, which are designed to align with the system design process. Staff members are continuing to discuss the changes with, and gather feedback from, the institutions and other stakeholders. The proposed changes will be brought to the Board for action at its May meeting. Jesus Hernandez and Sam Smith thanked Randy Spaulding and the academic staff for their good work.

State Need Grant – A process for accommodating the \$25 million cut to the State Need Grant program has been implemented for the affected public institutions. Two different options have been developed for tracking the eligible SNG students who will be served with local institution funds in lieu of state funds.

Washington Scholars – The selection committee for the Washington Scholars Program met and selected the 147 potential recipients plus 49 alternates from a pool of 650 applicants. The students who were selected will not be notified until it is determined if the program will be funded for the next academic year. Ethelda Burke, Roberta Greene, and Charley Bingham expressed their support for recognizing high-achieving students, regardless of the monetary reward results.

College Access Challenge Grant – The HECB administers the federal College Access Challenge Grant, which is a five year grant authorized by the Health and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010. The \$2 million per year federal CACG funding helps support the College Bound Scholarship program statewide through partner organizations.

Creation of a federally sponsored college access programs network – This work aligns well with the state's Strategic Master Plan in creating higher expectations for our K-12 students, providing services to needy students, and raising educational attainment to create prosperity and opportunity.

State Revenue Forecast and Budget Status

Jim Reed, policy and planning coordinator, provided an update on the state's revenue and budget status for the 2009-11 and 2011-13 biennia.

The March 2011 state revenue forecast (for the remainder of FY 2011, and for the 2011-13 biennium) was once again lower than hoped for, resulting in the need to reduce the 2009-11 budget by another \$80 million. General Fund revenue previously assumed available for the 2011-13 biennium was \$698 million less than forecast in November 2010.

Reed said additional reductions in state spending for higher education likely would result from the reduced revenue estimate, further eroding core higher education goals in the areas of affordability, enrollment opportunities, and the state's postsecondary educational attainment level.

Charley Bingham referenced a graph in Reed's presentation showing the percentage change in actual and proposed near General Fund expenditures for key state services between 2007 and 2013. State spending for higher education is continuing to decline through 2013, while spending for human services and K-12 were shown recovering significantly. Bingham asked how much additional tuition revenue would be needed to bring higher education funding up. Reed indicated the Governor had proposed \$330 million in tuition increases but even that amount would not bring the numbers back to the zero line.

Strategic Master Plan Update

Bennett introduced the discussion with a summary of the broad objectives of the strategic master plan; the context, scope, and process of the master plan update; and a preliminary timeline for organizing the work.

Leaders from the K-12, two-year and four-year sectors of public education in Washington described some of the initiatives that are being undertaken in their sectors to carry out the state's overarching goal and objectives contained in the master plan for higher education:

- Randy Dorn, Superintendent of Public Instruction, spoke about student preparation, transition points, and multiple pathways.
- James Gaudino, President of Central Washington University, representing the Council of Presidents spoke on transitions/completions, alignment with workforce needs, and economic development.
- Charlie Earl, Executive Director of the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, spoke on transitions/completions, performance-based funding, and system challenges.

Dorn said OSPI's primary goal is to graduate students, not to add more. The question is how to build a system that will give slots to these students. His answer: "We'll have to fund it."

Earl said the two-year system is well vested in the master plan and the state's two-year institutions are, in fact, ahead of plan goals for enrollments, transfer and student achievement. The biggest problem is how to sustain these gains with fewer resources, he said. Earl challenged the HECB to advocate for more resources for higher education by showing the social costs of reduced funding and conversely, the public benefits.

Gaudino concurred that higher education is making progress on master plan goals, but added the problem will lie in sustaining this progress. He said the plan should reflect political and financial reality. “A net zero budget is a decline.” For Central Washington University to balance its budget, it would have to raise tuition by as much as 50 percent.

Some of the examples given for producing more students at a lower cost included partnering with business, four-year/two-year partnerships, hybrid education delivery system, and working with the K-12 system to improve remediation rates.

Among the top impediments experienced by each sector are: balancing local autonomy with the need for systemwide efficiencies, fiscal constraints, and cultural difference between the world of students and adults.

Speakers agreed the master plan’s overarching goal of raising educational attainment significantly statewide, and the strategies needed to reach that goal, remain valid, but acknowledged that budget cuts had slowed progress. It is clear there are challenges to meet in the months ahead, and all sectors need to work collaboratively to achieve progress.

Common Core & College Readiness (ACT presentation)

A key strategy of the master plan is to promote a college-going culture. This includes work in college readiness, teacher professional development, and early outreach programs, among other initiatives. The State Board of Education has approved new Common Core State Standards, which are expected to be formally adopted by the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Representatives from American College Testing (ACT), Scott Frein, director of strategic development, and Sherri Miller, assistant vice president for educational planning and assessment, presented the findings of their recent report, which discusses how states, school districts, and schools can support the nationwide implementation of the Common Core Standards. The report is based on college and career readiness data gathered by ACT as part of its pre-college testing efforts.

The Common Core State Standards are designed to “provide a consistent, clear understanding of what students are expected to learn, so teachers and parents know what they need to do to help them.” To establish a baseline of performance standards, the report used a sample of 250,000 typical high school students and discussed how states, districts, and schools can support implementation of the Common Core State Standards.

The period between Common Core adoption and Common Core implementation offers an important opportunity to evaluate and reframe education policy and practice at all levels. ACT believes the report provides information that stakeholders can use to understand the current state of college and career readiness of students and to begin implementing programs and policies that best support the Common Core.

P-20 Transitions

Randy Spaulding, director of academic affairs, showed how work on P-20 transitions, being carried out by the HECB and its partners, supports the goal and objectives outlined in the master plan.

A panel of representatives from state higher education agencies, private institutions, and the K-12 system discussed some of the strategies their sectors use for developing college-ready students and classroom-ready teachers in achieving the master plan goal of raising educational attainment in Washington.

- Jessica Vavrus, Assistant Superintendent, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI).
- Eleni Papadakis, Executive Director, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (WTECB).
- Jan Yoshiwara, Deputy Executive Director of Education, State Board for Community & Technical Colleges (SBCTC).
- Susan Ellen Bacon, Associate Dean of Professional Development, Continuing Education and Outreach, Seattle University.

Programs and initiatives that support key master plan strategies include creating higher expectations for K-12 students, scaling up successful student advising and mentoring programs, engaging families and communities, creating multiple pathways from high school to college or workforce training, and preparing educators for the 21st Century.

Bacon described Seattle University's work partnering with the school districts for better prepared STEM teachers.

Papadakis described some of the youth strategies established by the WTECB:

- Guidance and mentoring – Starting in middle school, students need to connect with a caring adult who can help them sort through the many decisions they face.
- Relevant, applied learning – learning presented in a real world context.
- Improving on-time high school completion – Community programs that focus on dropout prevention and retrieval help at-risk students graduate on time.

Yoshiwara spoke about the need to leverage current assets to get better results. Among the efforts she cited were dual-credit programs for expanding college degree completion; increasing the number of credits for students with college-level skills; and expanding e-learning. The two-year colleges are redesigning their approach to college-ready students, shortening pre-college courses and expending less effort on remediation.

Presentation from theWashBoard.org

Rachelle Sharpe, HECB director for student financial assistance, provided background information regarding theWashBoard.org, a clearing house that helps students pay for college by connecting them to scholarship opportunities. Representatives from the Washington Scholarship Coalition provided more detail.

- Mary Beth Lambert, Marketing and Communications Consultant, Washington Scholarship Coalition
- Christine McCabe, Executive Director, College Spark Washington

Lambert and McCabe described the purpose of theWashBoard.org, what it aims to accomplish, what makes it different, and how the web site works. Basically, providers build the scholarships; students create their profiles; and the website shows which scholarships match the student profiles. In its first year of operation, \$12.5 million was awarded to students by providers using theWashBoard.org.

Statistics compiled by theWashBoard.org show that:

- About half of the students are in high school; the rest are preparing to attend or are already enrolled in college;
- Four out of ten are students of color;
- One out of ten are first-generation students; and
- Six out of ten reported a family income of less than \$50,000.

The **meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.**